Apions: Apionidae

The Apionidae are **small** weevils with **straight** antennae, unlike their relatives in the Curculionidae. Apion is ancient Greek for pear, and many of the species do have a pear-shape body because their shoulders are not very obvious and their abdomens are often swollen. Most of them are **black** or **metallic**, apart from a few brown or red species.

Species with pale front legs: **yellow**, orange, or **yellow-brown**. Compare *Squamapion* have pale brown tibiae, but their femurs are dark.

Apion. **Plain red** or **orange**.

Malvapion malvae, *Ixapion variegatum*, *Taenapion urticarium* and patterned *Exapion*. Wing-cases **patterned** from bands of hairs or from different colours of the surface: these are the only apions with patterns.

Plain *Exapion*. Hair-scales, especially underneath. Antennae inserted at the **base** of the rostrum, on a small **peg**. Compare *Squamapion* have antennae inserted near the base, but not on a peg, and they have dark femurs.

Kalcapion, *Eutrichapion viciae*, *Pseudapion rufirostre*, and *Rhopalapion longirostre*. Black or brassy. Underside with **thick hair-scales** or narrow flat scales, clearly hairy or scaled.

Yellow-legged *Protapion*. Black. Underside with **very fine** hair-scales only, not appearing hairy or scaled. Includes some of our commonest weevils. Compare The group above; more features are given in the species accounts. *Acentrotypus brunnipes* is probably extinct.

Oxystoma. Rostrum **pinched in** at the tip. Eyes bulging. Black or metallic blue. Compare *Protapion schoenherri* has yellow legs.

Several groups with **untoothed** claws. The claws on the end of each foot are slender, without a tooth at the base. Not an easy feature to see in the field, but it can be a useful confirmation when are you are starting to learn the groups.

Omphalapion. Pronotum **swollen**, very rounded at the sides and across the back. Wing-cases rather broad. Males are black, females have metallic blue wing-cases.

Acentrotypus brunnipes. Probably extinct. Legs black or brown. Very **weak**, shallow striae on the wing-cases. Male black, female metallic blue, purple, or black.

Pseudaplemonus limonii and metallic *Perapion*. Short to medium, **thick** rostrum. Metallic blue, green, purple, brassy, or red wing-cases.

Aizobius sedi, *Pseudoperapion brevirostre*, and non-metallic *Perapion*. Short, **thick** rostrum. **Black** wing-cases.

Helianthemapion aciculare. Very **narrow** pronotum and abdomen. Rostrum short and **thick**. On rock-roses.

Ceratapion. **Thick** antennae inserted near the **base** of the rostrum. Rostrum **swollen** at the point where the antennae are inserted. Metallic blue wing-cases. Compare *Diplapion* are black and they have a deep u-shape groove on the forehead. On thistles.

Aspidapion aeneum. Metallic blue or green. Rostrum rather thick. Deep **groove** on the forehead. On **mallows.**

Aspidapion radiolus and soror Metallic blue or green. Rostrum rather thick. Unique scutellum: long, with a saddle-like raised base. On **mallows.** Compare *Ceratapion* have the thicker antennae (especially the scape), the rostrum is swollen at the base of the antennae, and they have untoothed claws. *Perapion hydrolapathi* and *violaceum* have smaller eyes, slightly thicker antennae (especially the club), pronotum narrower at the base, untoothed claws, and a short scutellum without bumps at the base.

Diplapion. **Thick** antennae inserted near the **base** of the rostrum. **Black**. On mayweeds and dasies.

Stenopterapion. **Narrow**, wing-cases widest **behind** the middle. **Long** head. Black or metallic.

Squamapion. Antennae inserted near the **base** of the rostrum. Wing-cases obviously **hairy**, black. Sides of pronotum slightly **bulging** in the middle and **pinched in** at front and rear. Legs brown or black.

Eutrichapion, *Ischnopterapion*, *Betulapion*, *Pseudoprotapion astragali*, *Holotrichapion*, *Protapion filirostre*, *Pirapion immune*, *Protopirapion atratulum*, *Hemitrichapion*, *Cyanapion*, *Melanapion minimum*, and *Catapion*. The rest of the species are difficult to put into groups. They are more easily recognised as species rather than as genera. The differences between them are treated in the species accounts.